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21 December 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR:

III 25X1C

SAR/OCI File - Input File - Census

Director, Editorial Division, OERI

SUBJECT

Implementing the Study Group's recommendations re
NIS General Survey Section 4 (Sociology)

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1. It will be recalled that, among the various findings of this NO/1 Study Group which reported on 30 September 1966, was a recommendation (Para. 428 on p. 38) for experimentation in new ways of producing the General Survey sociological section which might both improve the quality of the product and reduce the manpower strain on OCI. During FY 68, "Inputs" for Subsection 4-B (Population) and 4-D (Labor & Management) were to be supplied to OCI by the Bureau of the Census and the Bureau of Labor Statistics respectively, and the Special Surveys Branch of Census was to produce a complete Section 4 on two different countries. The two complete Section 4s were quickly arranged for and, after considerable discussion and negotiation, an abbreviated list of 10 "input" countries (out of the year's total of 30) was finally agreed to in mid-May 1967 for the initial experiment, with some implication that a total more in line with the original recommendation could be undertaken the following year. (See Attachment A for countries and dates.) Because much of the work for FY 68 had already started by then, there was a tendency to select countries due later in the fiscal year and to fix the due dates for the inputs only a few weeks before the whole General Survey was due to the SA/R/OCI for review.

2. At the present time, only 9 "inputs" have been turned in out of the 20 called for by the FY 68 experiment, and one of the two complete Section 4s; and in OCI's view this does not provide an adequate basis for making the evaluation of the experiment that is called for by the Committee recommendation. A number of difficulties have arisen regarding the "input" system, a few of them casting some doubt on the competence with which the "input" was prepared but most of them related to the comparatively short deadlines provided by the FY 68 schedule; at this point it would be hard to say with confidence whether these are incurable defects or merely the initial "bugs" likely to be found in any new process. As of mid-December, moreover, OCI's General Survey production schedules have already been worked out for the 30 FY 69 countries, and specific assignments of personnel are in some cases being made for the early items on this program.

3. It is therefore recommended that the present experiment in Section 4 production be neither expanded nor contracted but simply extended through FY 69 on the same level as for FY 68, and that the evaluation of its results be postponed till mid-December 1968. At this same quantitative level, however, the experiment can probably be made more meaningful by introducing two changes in the FY 69 portion of it: (1) a considerably longer period between the "input" due dates (which have tended to slip by a week or two) and the date the complete General

extend
experiment

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Attachment A

1. FY 69 Schedule of "Inputs" for 4-B (Population) and 4-D (Labor & Manpower)

		Input due in OCI	Population Input rec'd in OCI	Labor Input rec'd in OCI	Sec 4 draft due SA/R/OCI
AFRICA	Rwanda & Burundi	28 Aug 67	3 Oct + ✓	26 Sep + ✓	2 Oct 67
	Gabon	16 Oct	30 Oct ✓	3 Oct	20 Nov
	Algeria	28 Nov	14 Dec	15 Dec	2 Jan 68
	Malagasy Rep.	28 Feb 68	--	--	3 Apr
	Upper Volta	29 Mar	-- ✓	-- ✓	3 May
MIDDLE EAST	Jordan	4 Oct 67	19 Oct	3 Nov ++	8 Nov 67
	Nepal	15 Jan 68	-- ✓	-- ✓	19 Feb 68
FAR EAST	Malaysia *	4 Aug 67 ✓	7 Aug	--	8 Sep 67
	Philippines	19 Mar 68	-- ✓	--	23 Apr 68
WESTERN HEMISPHERE	Bahia	19 Dec 67	--	--	23 Jan 68
	Ecuador **	5 Feb 68	--	--	11 Mar

* Input on Population only; none on Manpower

** Input on Manpower only; none on Population

+ Corrected input; original version, submitted on 31 Aug, had to be returned

++ Submitted by agreement in two installments, 1 Sept and 3 Nov

2. FY 69 Schedule of Section 4a to be produced in toto by Census unit

Country	Draft due to OBG	Draft delivered to OBG
Mauritania 4	26 Sep 67	8 Sep
Ghana 4	8 Mar 68	

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Survey is expected to reach the SA/R/OCI from the OCI regional component; and (2) a more even distribution among geographic regions of this outside assistance, which for FY 68 has been concentrated heavily on Africa.

4. Quite outside from the manpower savings for OCI, success in this experiment, which concerns the priority item in the NIS program, would in the undersigned's opinion do more for the success of the program as a whole than maintaining the present production levels of specialized NIS material (Sections 41 and 44) on population and manpower.

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[REDACTED]
Special Assistant for Research
Office of Current Intelligence

Attachment:
As stated

Distribution:

Orig. & 1 - Addressee
1 - [REDACTED]
1 - OBGI file
1 - Chrono
3 - spare

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9. Perhaps a paragraph or two on each of these subjects is in order. The problems tend to overlap in any case. First, the matter of people--or more precisely, too many people. I know that OCI is one of the smaller offices in the Agency, and that our NIS responsibilities require people. But even in strictly current work, I think we frequently have too many people looking at the same or closely related subjects. I know my views are not shared by all, but my experience suggests that even in times of crisis too many people with not enough good leadership tend to encumber the machinery and make the job more difficult. I believe that nearly everyone in OCI should constantly have more to do than he can do, and that this would result in individuals setting priorities for themselves and in less scrambling to find suitable topics to address.

10. Some will protest that if our ranks were thin we would not be adequately staffed during a crisis situation and that overworked analysts would not have time for mulling over and writing those longer, thoughtful memos which we all prize. I don't think so. I think we could meet crisis needs by expecting people to work long hours--as they generally do anyway--and by moving people frequently from one area to another. We have demonstrated time after time that competent analysts in one area can move, pick up the threads of a new situation, and contribute, or at least relieve others to write the longer, more difficult analytic pieces. OCI should resemble a newspaper more than a university. An analyst should be more journalist than academician. We are not and should not be the repository of all knowledge on foreign countries. In my view, OCI should be a small corps of good thinkers and writers, who might not have all the facts, but who know where to get facts and how to present them with clarity and analytic insight.

11. You have said, and I agree, that there is ample room in OCI for the specialist who wants to be a leading expert in his field. But I think the bulk of our people, indeed the core of the office, need not be expert in the academic sense. Analysts often become expert as they pursue their responsibilities in OCI, but the ability to perceive the fundamentals of an intelligence question, to discern what is important and what is not, and especially to generate ideas is not confined to experts. What we need, of course, are first rate people. Getting them,

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developing them, and keeping them are problems that can best be met by challenging their abilities and providing them opportunities for job satisfaction they would find hard to duplicate. This could be done better, I think, in a smaller, even more flexible office.

12. I recognize that a goal of becoming smaller could not be achieved overnight; indeed, it probably would take years and it certainly would require some tinkering with OCI's responsibilities. But if being smaller was a goal, it could be reflected in our hiring practices and in our personnel decisions more than it is now because of Agency-wide policies. I would, for example, begin making greater efforts to move people out of this office if they cannot do the job properly, or at least remove them from the current production machinery. I would stop all hiring for the time being, except in extraordinary cases, and I would make a maximum effort to fill openings with people already on board. I would also make certain that supervisors do a proper job of testing a new person during his probational period and that those who do not measure up are told so frankly and not hired permanently. I think all of this is being done now to some extent.

13. I acknowledged earlier that any real cutback in the size of the office would require some redefining of OCI's mission. One place to start would be to review our priorities and perhaps list countries and subjects that normally would not be covered in current publications. I am not certain by any means, but there must be many topics which do not require such coverage because US interests are not affected. Maybe our capabilities should be encyclopedic because we never know when or on what we'll be asked to comment. But does a newspaper maintain a correspondent in every country? Several may be required in some, stringers in others, and none in others. Why don't we do the same? Concentrate on priority areas of US interest and maintain a caretaking/filing capability in many others. The latter could be checked over from time to time by roving analysts whose job would be to determine if anything useful could be said.

14. A more basic problem on which I have stronger views is the NIS and Handbook program, which consumes far more time and manpower than I realized before coming to the European Division. I do not need to re-play all

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the arguments about the NIS; I don't even know your views for sure. But in my view, current intelligence and the NIS do not mix. I know the argument that the NIS is useful for training analysts; maybe, but if I came to OCI to work in current intelligence and found myself turning out a long paper on Albanian political dynamics, I would be distressed. When a new person spends much of his probational period on the NIS, as happens frequently, we really have little to judge his capabilities in terms of OCI's primary job--current intelligence.

STATINTL

15. The Agency cannot simply divest itself of the NIS. I know that. But clearly the best way to reduce the size of this office and simultaneously improve morale and motivation is to take a different approach to the NIS. We might compartmentalize the NIS more within OCI, begin diverting it to another office, or work to channel it out of the Agency altogether. I have never cared much for [redacted] way of compartmenting the NIS because of the adverse impact it has on the morale of the handful of people he has doing the job. But in contrast to the recommendations of [redacted] committee, I think keeping the NIS separate from current work is the only sensible way to do it; that suggests either a separate NIS division within the office or shunting the job back out of OCI where it does not belong. I know that many superior NIS products are turned out using the present system; the ones on the USSR, West Germany, China and France are all truly first rate. But they are mainly unclassified and could have been produced elsewhere. I tip my hat to a person like [redacted] who brings unmatched enthusiasm, energy, imagination, and academic excellence to his NIS work. But is his work and product properly OCI's? Is it even intelligence?

STATINTL

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16. The handbooks are an even worse example of a make-work project. I know they were requested by Kissinger in 1969, but does he still want them? Not according to [redacted]. Instead of letting us slip deadlines and unofficially ignore certain countries which clearly do not require a handbook, why not stop the program altogether, or revise it extensively? A handbook may well be a useful spin-off from the work of a current intelligence analyst; many probably have all the makings at their fingertips or in their heads. But the way handbooks are done now is by relying on a recently issued NIS and the product

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is mainly duplication. Analysts are painfully aware of this, of course, and most of them have nothing but contempt for the handbooks.

17. The whole question of research bothers me. I suppose any paper of more than 30 pages could be called research, but I get the feeling we are playing with a distinction that need not be made. There doubtless are projects we should undertake, as we do now, which can properly be called research. But I think most memos, most longer papers of any kind, should be primarily an extension of our current work. Too many analysts think of a memorandum as research, when in fact what they are being asked to do is pull together developments they have followed and written about from day to day and present them with some ideas and analysis--not just more and more background. Any analyst worth his salt who is working on a country or topic full time should be able to produce a ten-page memorandum of ideas in a day or two. Indeed, anyone working on an important, fluid situation probably should have a paper or two germinating in his head and/or in partial draft all the time.

STATINTL

Research

9. The committee feels that considerable uncertainty exists over whether research is a bread and butter task. What should the relationship between current intelligence tasks and in-depth, long term political research be? We conclude that the two go hand in hand and that the separation of OCI's current and research tasks--suggested by some observers--is not the answer. An analyst is an analyst is an analyst. The ability to deal with a problem as it develops piecemeal on a day-to-day basis is intrinsically related to the successful drafting of a comprehensive research project. We should regard our research efforts as an educative process designed to provide the policy maker with knowledge about the many facets of a country. Although in some cases research can and should be geared to policy, we think it sufficient in some cases that officials, after reading a research paper, simply have a clearer idea of the dynamics operating in any particular country or in the world community.

10. The NIS is a special research problem. Perhaps the most pertinent fact is that a majority in OCI consider the program an "albatross." The a priori view that the program is inherently useless leads to a circular, self-fulfilling prophecy that the final product will be inferior. Many young analysts believe there is little glory or opportunity for rapid career advancement for those who labor over an NIS. There is a common belief, at least in some divisions, that the program is a dumping ground for analysts who can't handle current work and that NIS writers advance at a slower pace. NIS analysts are also painfully aware that their chiefs rarely review their product as carefully as current production.

11. With a new man heading up the NIS program in OBGI, the committee recognizes that the project is now in a state of flux. We are therefore reluctant to make sweeping recommendations until we see how the program shakes down under [REDACTED] guidance. But we do believe there are some general problems which can be corrected.

STATINTL

Recommendations

a. The research effort should be confined to papers which rarely exceed 30-40 pages in length. Research papers should focus on issues which convey a sense of immediacy to the reader. Exhaustive histories and encyclopedic compendia--which won't be read in any case--should not be a part of our mission.

b. Senior officers in OCI should call to the attention of division and branch chiefs memoranda and reports which meet OCI standards and otherwise give guidance as to what constitutes a good research report.

c. Quality rather than quantity should be emphasized. Too many analysts are engaged in make-work disguised as research.

d. The OCI Research Office should be abolished. By instituting a separate function, we have merely divorced research from the everyday work of the divisions. Supervisors at the division and branch chief level should oversee research in somewhat the same fashion that they supervise current work.

e. With only rare exceptions, analysts should do both current and NIS work. Analysts should not be assigned to successive NIS surveys. Analysts who handle the current reporting on a country are best equipped to bring that knowledge to bear on an NIS and effectively to produce it. Many of the morale problems connected with the NIS could be eliminated in this fashion.

f. Many who work on the NIS believe their promotion rate is slower because they work primarily on that program. If promotion rates are basically the same for current and NIS assignments, that fact should be made clear.

g. NIS studies and research projects should be reviewed at the division level so that supervisors are thoroughly familiar with the product of all of their analysts.

h. Supervisors at all levels should emphasize that quality is as important, if not more so, than deadlines.

i. Branch chiefs should make clear to analysts that NIS writing is an important factor in evaluating performance and that the same standards of excellence required in current production are also required in an NIS. The front office should emphasize to branch and division chiefs that they, too, will in part be judged by the quality of the NIS. (As we recall, a memorandum to this effect was put out at some point. Perhaps it should be re-issued.)

j. The Handbook program falls into the make-work category and should be continued only on a very selective basis. The NIS survey and the Handbook contain much of the same information and analysts waste valuable time by having to produce both.

k. A quiet corner should be set aside for research so that analysts can get away from the current press of business for several uninterrupted hours or days at a time. The bull-pen atmosphere in many OCI offices is not conducive to reflection.